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AN ADDRESS

BY

WM. PRESTON JOHNSTON, LL. D.,

BEFORE THE

LOUISIANA STATE

PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION,

AT

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FELLOW-TEACHERS,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

President Jefferson Davis once told me that the first political speech he ever made was in reply to the great orator, S. S. Prentiss, of Mississippi, in a joint debate. After the discussion, in a friendly conversation, his eloquent opponent frankly, but kindly, criticised and complimented him, and concluded thus: "My young friend, when I was your age I began by trying to instruct and convince men by logic. It is in vain, and now I am satisfied to persuade by pleasing them." In this saying the veteran evinced his knowledge of mankind, and yet, with his warning before me, I am constrained to keep in the rougher road. My opportunities are so few, my message is, to my mind, so weighty, and my audience so capable of serious thought, that I shall venture to trespass on your indulgence with sober reflections even at the risk of being a little prolix and dry, trusting to the distinguished speakers with us on this occasion to brighten it with humor and eloquence.

When I look around me now, and see those who are gathered here for the great contest before us with the powers of ignorance, my heart swells with the presage of victory. It was not always thus. If we look back but a few years we can well remember how cold was the response to every call for broader and higher work in education. And if to-day we are assured of better things, we must remember that in that recent past it was not the will that was wanting, but the means. But the public school teachers have now met under the most encouraging circumstances, and I am here to-day, in obedience to the request of your committee, to take part in your programme.

It will be my business on this occasion to discuss the question of "State education as a factor in our civilization."

Civilization is a word we all use every day, and everybody has a notion, more or less vague, of what is meant by it. But if we attempt to make clear and definite to our minds an exact conception of the state of affairs it expresses, we shall find ourselves involved in difficulties. The philosophic Guizot explained it by citing a number of illustrations of what was *not*

civilization, but to these negatives he added the main underlying facts involved in it. He says: "The first idea comprised in the word civilization is the notion of progress, development. It calls up within us the notion of a people advancing, of a people in the course of improvement and melioration." He then explains progress and development as an improvement in the organization and well-being of the social state combined with the quickening of mind in the individual man. These two elements are comprised in the fact of civilization and go to make it up.

All nature, all existence, seems dual if viewed aright. The Zoroastrian doctrine of two conflicting principles in the universe, though not true as held by those old Persians, contains a truth—a great truth. The centripetal and centrifugal forces appear in nearly every problem we propose to ourselves. By these forces, nature, life and society are held in equilibrium; so that true progress is motion in an orbit, which is always the same in obedience to a general law of material or spiritual process, and yet never the same in its position in space or rational environment. The Greek Sage placed truth in the golden mean, and the best moderns have accepted the aphorism as an axiom.

Two principles that are contradictory in their phenomena—their seemingness—and yet are bound by an inseparable unity are the principles of individual liberty and the principle of social order. The instinct of individual liberty, to which we owe so much, which requires for its fruition, courage, perseverance, aspiration and intelligence, and which leads to such grand results when properly directed, vanishes in the vagaries of the chartered libertine or of blind barbarian gropings, unless brought into its due relations in the human soul by the binding centripetal instinct of social order. In its last analysis, individualism doubtless originates in selfishness, while social order is altruistic, regarding the welfare of others more than egoistic considerations; and yet, by a strange paradox, the struggle by each man for personal liberty, for the inviolability of his own bodily freedom, of his right to think for himself, and of his native moral dignity—his self-respect—is the chief guaranty and final sanction of social order; while on the other

hand, social order is the sole condition on which personal liberty and the freedom of the human will are possible. Men are born into society. They can not be born or reared or even live truly human lives, outside of it. It is a law of their being that they must think alike. They are so constituted that things look, sound and feel in the same way to healthy minds. There is a norm, or standard, to which few, if any, exactly conform in every respect, but from which few vary widely—an average, or median, way of perceiving things that is the fundamental condition of rational consciousness. Kant gives it the technical name of “the transcendental unity of apperception.” Professor Royce of Harvard, in one of his able books, with greater simplicity of speech, calls it “sanity,” and this it is. The ability to work in harness with the rest of the human race, to share in “all thoughts, all passions, all delights, whatever stirs this mortal frame,” its sympathies and its many-sided love, is the test of this sanity. He is most sane who is most central, sympathetic and energetic in his relations to his fellow man. Just in so far as one departs from this central position, he is a crank. When he becomes utterly alien to the general notion of things he is a lunatic—insane. Hence as the individual wills of citizens are brought into agreement to live according to a higher ideal, harmony ensues; and hence proceed social order, moral order, civilization, as the rational product and outcome of natural instincts. Social order is the vital air of liberty, its only possible continuing environment. I may go further and say that a true civilization, an ideal civilization, which is the most perfect expression of social order, is also its correlation with the liberty of the individual in its final and most concrete form. That wonderful practical philosopher, the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, said: “That which is not good for the swarm, neither is it good for the bee.”

The great onward movement of society, of which we all feel the thrill, is the effort, unconscious or only half conscious, to build up for itself a system of moral order in which the general or social relations shall be so co-ordinated and adjusted as to preserve that freedom of the will, that liberty of self-development, in which individual man can best realize his self-consciousness, can best lift himself to conformity with his divine

ideal, can become more like his God. When that social condition is even measurably attained we shall for the first time witness a true civilization. But it will not come about by allowing every man an unchecked license. Society must fix the metes and bounds by law to much which is now left to an arbitrary self-will. That there is now nowhere such civilization as I have indicated must be apparent to any one who looks an inch beneath the varnish and veneer of the boasted centres of modern society. We need not go to the effete and putrid cities of Asia; lift the lid from the seething caldron of the great capitals of Europe and America and what do we see? Are these cities that are built upon a rock? Are their foundations laid in the solid bedrock of justice between individuals and classes, of faithful, incorruptible, official service, of sound morality in the people? I wish I could answer "yes." But we know that fair dealing between man and man is not only not sought, but not even taught; and that the contrary—the robber plan—"That he shall take who hath the power and he shall keep who can," is the rule. We know that public officers grow rich by sharing in the sale of franchises of which they are the trustees and custodians, not the owners. And we know that the whole structure of society rests upon a miasmatic marsh of hoodlumism, frequently endangering its stability and always poisoning its atmosphere. We know, too, that ignorance, with its low ideals, is the most prolific cause of all this evil. When we look around us we can not fail to see that this human life of ours, as we are living it, is most tragic; but the tragedy is stained and degraded by much that is ignoble and vile. Shall we then despair? Not so! We must gird our loins for the doing of God's work in the world, whatever come of it. And we may clearly hope that good will come of it. We know this, and our hearts are stirred to set right these wrongs, not for the good it will do *us*—for the sowers in the moral world do not gather the harvest—but because we are of a race foreordained to organize and lift up humanity; because we must be continually seeking a better order in which law and righteousness shall supplant arbitrary caprice and the manifold forms of wrong.

In its highest and best form our ideal is of a state where justice and moral order shall reign, and where every citizen

shall be protected in his rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. In a republic which had attained a true civilization, I may even say a reasonable civilization, this would be the case. There the public indignation would wax hot against any and all who assailed any individual in these, his sacred rights; and the combined power of society would visit swift and ample punishment upon the wrong-doer who inflicted injury upon the life, person or property of another citizen. Protection of its citizens would be its prime duty, and this would extend to the untrammelled exercise of their free will, the right to think their own thoughts, and the right, so that they injured no one else, to seek happiness by the pursuit of legitimate aspirations. This all seems very easy and simple. The changes are rung upon it every day, as if it were the music to which we are marching and keeping time. But it matters not who says so, such is not the case. The realization of it looks so far away that an old man may well despair of ever beholding it with his eyes, and there is good reason to fear that even forty years' wandering in the wilderness will not bring any of you into the goodly inheritance of this Promised Land. If we could even have an assured view of it, as Moses of old from Pisgah, though we entered it not, we might cease to wring our hearts for the generations to come. That apostle of the Intellectual life through the Higher Education, Matthew Arnold, tells us,

“ Years hence, perhaps, may dawn an age,  
More fortunate, alas! than we,  
Which, without hardness, will be sage,  
And gay without frivolity.  
Sons of the world, oh, speed those years:  
But while we wait, allow our tears! ”

Civilization—that is, civic life in its fullness, its accomplished righteousness, its illuminated intellectuality, its realized moral aspirations—is as yet far away;—a Golden Jerusalem, that the scoffers and skeptics call a cloud and a sunset mirage; but we are sailing toward it, and true men hold to their course with as steady a purpose and as resolute hearts as sustained Columbus when, through stormy billows and unknown seas, he kept on and on until there burst upon him the vision of a New World. Whosoever may perish in this voyage by peril of sea, the bark that bears us will surely touch the shore of a

New World, where the bearer of the Cross, as Christopher loved to think himself, will find that practical Christianity, love for our fellow beings, set into the framework of an inflexible justice, has at last established the reign of peace on earth and good will among men. This is perfect civilization; and, without it, civilization is not.

In this seeking for a better state of affairs, unless wisdom guide our feet, we may go far astray. On one line, however, we can feel certain. For, however imperfect our methods, however defective our attainment, we are moving in the right direction, when, as teachers, we throw light into the dark places of the human mind and thus make possible the apprehension of higher moral truths. Enlightenment is the necessary antecedent of an improved condition. We must know what is right before we do it. But while engaged in these tasks, often humble in character and degree, we are not hindered as citizens from aiding in other movements in that grand process to a higher moral order which seems the most manifest sign of the work of the Spirit of God on earth.

I have sketched for you in broad characters what I conceive civilization to be. To state it in general terms again, it is the establishment of perfect moral order in society, yet in such manner as to secure and guaranty the freedom of the individual will; the superstructure resting on the consent and approval of the individuals who make up the community. But, in trying to make clear my notion of civilization, I have described a state of affairs that necessarily implies general education, which must mean State education. It would appear that there could be no civilization without it.

It is the business of the State to train up its children to be useful citizens, each to fill his place and do his part in the social order. To make education do its work effectually a definite purpose must exist in the minds of the rulers who direct, of the government which shapes and carries out a scheme of education. Let me illustrate. The object of the Spartan commonwealth was to secure the power of its ruling class, the nobles, against foreign aggression and domestic disturbance. To perpetuate this order of things, it adopted immutable laws and trained every man by a most rigid and irksome discipline to the

life of a soldier. A caste of subject citizens and a still lower caste of slaves—the unhappy Helots—completed the State, but without political rights. The education of the noble class was adapted to its ends, and a handful of Spartan warriors for hundreds of years astonished the world by the production of men phenomenal of their kind. I do not hold Sparta up to you for imitation, though that rock-ribbed little republic presented many virtues worthy of imitation; one virtue especially, too often forgotten, that loyalty to home and to brethren of our own blood and lineage which modern definitions forbid us to call patriotism. Sparta trained and banded its citizens to the end that the state should not perish and that it should dominate whomsoever it came in contact with, and so became formidable. Philip of Macedon and his great son, Alexander, enlarged the idea, and conquered the world. I have used the example of Sparta, as I have said, as an illustration of the value of a definite purpose in government and in education.

But the world has moved; and another, a broader, a higher purpose is perceived by the people and revealed by governments, and especially, I hope, by our American commonwealths, in framing schemes for the education of their children. It was a mighty step in advance when society admitted that it existed for the sake of the individual, even as the individual existed for society; that the duties of obedience and protection were correlative. But the dogma which has prevailed so extensively, that society owed to individuals protection against each other merely—nothing more—falls far short of the truth. This is practically admitted in every public improvement that is undertaken, in every organized governmental effort for the amelioration of the social condition. Without delaying the course of these remarks by the argument of this question, we may assume what has long been the theory on which society has acted, that it is the duty of the state not only to protect its citizens in their fundamental rights, but to use all possible means to give them the opportunity for the highest development of their native powers and gifts; for thus only can society, acting through its individual members, realize its own highest development; thus only, indeed, can it insure its continued existence and permanent safety. It is at last clearly perceived

that the purpose for which the state exists is, as I have said, a constant evolution toward a better moral order, expressing itself in a higher and purer civilization, and that this progress of society is to be achieved only by that training of the individual which we sum up under the term education. The state undertakes a general system of education because it is for the benefit of the state, for the general welfare, for the preservation and improvement of the social order.

And first, I may say to you, my brethren, that the only possible way to attain this higher and better order of things is to be constant and instant in well doing for the state, to take long views of our course of action and short views in our acting, "to do the next thing," to help and insist on every betterment of our political condition, by constitutional amendment, by legislative act, by municipal ordinance, by organized associations and by popular opinion. But *your* especial business is to form a clear and high ideal of the duty of the state in the education of its children and do your best to attain this ideal in actual practice.

What education will achieve this? What preparation of our young people will best fit each to reach up to and realize the fullness of his power?

Let us take the case of a little child. We have all felt the force of Wordsworth's beautiful suggestion that—

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy;"

and elsewhere in the *Excursion*:

"Thou who didst wrap the cloud  
Of infancy around us that Thyself  
Therein, with our simplicity, awhile  
Might'st hold on earth communion undisturbed."

Surely the divine reason that has lit the spark in a human soul keeps breathing upon it until it shines with its full intelligence. In the first mysterious struggles of the mind in infancy and early childhood, maternal care, born of an instinctive affection, should I not rather say inspired by an effluence of divinity, gives the impulse, that, acting conjointly with the inherited nature of the babe, opens its eyes and its consciousness to the action of the exterior world. The mother's love is the

purest reflection of the divine love we see here on earth. Her instincts teach her how to teach her child. The mother is all suggestion; the infant responds by imitation. Infinite repetition and imitation of a gesture, a word, an idea, fixes it on the plastic brain of the child, and this process goes on continually, until it has a well earned stock of infant lore, of baby knowledge, more or less useful, according to the wisdom of the mother. The misfortune is that this instruction does not continue long enough. Circumstances, household cares, a hundred causes distract the mother from the most useful and important business of her life; for the highest vocation to which a human being is called is motherhood, and the highest function of motherhood is building up the child for this world and the next. Mothers, build up your children all you can, mind, body and soul, before you pass them on to the next best friend they can have, a conscientious teacher.

Richter, in his *Levana*, a most suggestive book to teachers, says: "Like the eggs of birds, whether of song or prey, and like the new-born young of the dove, or of the vulture, all at first require warmth, not nourishment, which might have a different effect. And what, then, is warmth to the human chicken? Happiness." Under such poetic form this great thinker has veiled a profound philosophic thought, and it is to this that I direct your attention. All that a mother has to do at first is to secure the happiness of her child by attention to its physical well being and by protecting it from moral and mental shock. Enjoyment in its possession and in its gladness is better for her and for it than the often misdirected effort to train it and teach it. Babyhood is the realm of innocence, not of wisdom. The mother brings into the young life the joy she feels in being a mother, and in the sunshine of the soul the infant grows and buds and blossoms. We are told that in Japan one never hears an angry word to a child, and that children grow up in an atmosphere of gentleness and courtesy. If this be so there, and it should be so everywhere, then it has touched, in one respect at least, a higher point of civilization than any Christian land. The curse of childhood is fear. It makes cowards; it makes liars; it makes tyrants. Dispel this black cloud from the lives of our little ones, and light them up with

“ the warmth of happiness,” the sunshine of love. I was never a harsh father, but I can truly say that I regret every act of severe discipline exercised toward my children. There is another and a better way, but your hearts must teach it to you. If you can only respond to the natural craving of childhood for knowledge by answering truly and wisely the questions that agitate it, education will go on as fast as heart can wish.

When I was a young man, I was very much afraid of hurting children’s minds with books; of course, there is danger of such a thing. But experience has taught me that it does not exist, if books are rightly used. There is no reason why a very young child may not learn the alphabet or the numerals as readily as a like number of other objects, or why the printed or written word is so very much harder to remember than the uttered word. A little learned every day soon puts a child in possession of the tools which it can use to build for itself the scaffolding for great thoughts. Coleridge sings,

“ In Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure dome decree.”

But neither poet nor prince ever built a pleasure dome loftier, or filled with wilder delights, than does the riotous imagination of childhood. And here let me say what I can not now dilate on; in my opinion, there is a sound, philosophical basis for the kindergarten, if judiciously employed, and especially for children of homes in which they are neglected either through fault or misfortune. I wish there could be a kindergarten in every village and school district in the State. But children should not tarry in them too long.

The time comes, however, when there is no dispute that children should be in a school where the great fundamentals of knowledge, the tools of knowledge, and the use of them are taught. They ought all to learn to read and write and count. It pays. Such a general basis of knowledge is like the current coin without which commerce is impossible, except in its rude form of barter. Without this small change—the dimes and quarter dollars—of human intercourse, all communication degenerates into clownish chatter and clumsy mistakes. To be able to read a sign post is something. It puts a man on his way, when otherwise he might be put out of it with great loss

and peril. To handle simple arithmetic does not seem much; but it really means a great deal to the commonwealth. The difference between a community that has mastered it and one ignorant of it is immense—it is the difference between barbarism and a *quasi* civilization. It is of no use talking about it; our people *must* all have the primary school education. And we may justly claim that much is being done in this matter; but still we must recollect how small a part it is of what there is to do. Let us make haste to get about this work and lift the reproach of ignorance from the good name of our State.

But what children shall stop at this point, the end of the primary grade, and who shall go on? Who must be satisfied with just these rudiments of knowledge? This is a question most reasonable to ask. Natural selection will nearly answer it. There are comparatively few that you can induce to go on. Everybody knows that books and book-learning, no matter how useful in their place, do not complete the true idea of education. The great mass of our knowledge and training is acquired outside of the school room. Everybody understands in some sort of a way that, while the rudiments of knowledge will help to get a living and to smooth the pathway of life, they are after all, as I have called them, mere tools. You know a machine is only an adjustment of the primitive tools so that they can be made to work together with vastly increased power and efficiency. In like manner the knowledges, the arts and sciences, in their simple groupings and in their fullness and highest reaches, are machines framed and adapted from those humble rudiments of knowledge. But there is many a hand that knows itself fitted to the axe or the hoe, but not to guide an engine. Many, indeed most, minds find themselves satisfied with physical or mental labor that requires little skill. They employ successfully the simplest implements, some of handicraft, some of thought, but have no aptitude for the more difficult problems. Destiny has decreed the length of every man's tether. He can not go beyond it. Education is meant to enable him to avail himself of it to its utmost extent. In plain language I repeat that most people will not go beyond the primary grade of education through some unfitness for further cultivation. They have no appetite for abstruser thought. In

most men there is a decided aversion to it. A hard necessity arising from the narrowness of the family resources checks and turns aside many who could, and should, rise higher in the intellectual scale. Where this is a real necessity, it is one of the sad things of life. But very often it is a mere pretext, springing from an unwillingness to make sacrifices or from doubts as to the reality of educational advantages. In either of these cases, the youth is cut off from further progress. But if he is content, no great loss will ensue to society or to himself. But genius refuses to be satisfied with mediocre conditions. It *will* go on. I remember that every discouragement was thrown in the way of the distinguished mathematician and astronomer Mary Somerville by her parents, to prevent her learning mathematics; but when the candles were taken away to keep her from studying geometry, she went over the propositions by mere force of memory. Finally, her father, Admiral Fairfax, said to her mother, "Peg, we must put a stop to this or we shall have Mary in a strait-jacket one of these days. There was X, who went raving mad about the longitude." Yet Mrs. Somerville later in life touched the topmost heights of astronomical science, through an unquenchable thirst for its study. And you will all recollect the obstacles thrown in the way of the illustrious Pascal, with the sole effect of stimulating him to higher endeavor. And this is not uncommon experience.

But, apart from people of genius, you will find as the result of a prevalent intellectual inertia that the great majority of our young people are stopped on, or before, the close of their schooling in the primary grades. That I am not mistaken in this may be seen in the New Orleans Schools, where out of 20,000 children only about 600 are in the High Schools. Still, it is sheerest folly to undervalue the enormous uplift of enlightenment of our people, the tremendous advance in civilization, effected by a general diffusion of primary school education. The only parallel I can think of is what the geographers tell us. A rise of fifteen feet of the ocean level would submerge one-half of the Gulf States. Let the waters rise—the tidal wave of knowledge!

There are persons who, thinking their interest in the schools at an end when their connection with them ceases,

declaim against any further education by the State or through public taxation. Let us look into this a little. Two classes of objections are raised against public High School education. One is that it is a rich man's school, to which the poor man's children can not afford to go, and for whose instruction they have no use. The other is that it is a poor man's school, to which the rich man's children do not go, and for which he should not be obliged to pay taxes. These objections are suicidal; both can not be true, and in fact neither is true. It is neither the rich man's school nor the poor man's. It is the *citizens'* school, in which the State give *its* children, rich and poor, a chance to find out whether they are able to eat of the tree of knowledge, whether they have appetite and teeth and digestion to strip the rind and feed upon the heart of it. Is it not plain, too, that the young man who knows that he has been educated by the state for her service will be more apt to feel his obligation as a citizen than he who believes that he owes his education to his family only? There is, it is true, no real difference between the two cases in a final analysis, as the father's enjoyment of protection and his opportunities for his family are given him by the state, but this is not obvious to every one, and the ordinary man is apt to feel as I have just mentioned.

When the commonwealth calls its militia into service, every one understands the necessity of company officers and regimental officers, and nobody complains that provision has been made for training them. It should seem equally plain that the State should provide for the High School, which trains the people who are to officer society; foremen in its shops, who rise till they own them; accountants and clerks, who become the heads of firms; leading farmers and planters, who introduce method into their affairs and point out the way to convert loss into profit. These and others like them in other vocations are the men that officer society, that give it coherence and organization, that keep it marching to the music of progress. If the State would exist, it must see to it that there shall be an ample supply of these men. If the State does not equip her own sons for these positions, she must be content to see them filled by aliens, as has so often been the

case in Louisiana, in the mechanic arts and many other branches of business. And this is the best proof that citizens thus equipped are necessary, and that such knowledge must be had by importation or education. It is evidently an important element in our civilization, and should be part of the education provided by the State. To the objection of those who point to Germany and say that it is easy to overstock a country with superior men, the proper reply is that it is not easy to overstock the world, and when we have too many at home we can send them abroad to lead and govern other countries, as Old England and New England have done, and as Germany is now doing.

Let me guard my words a little here, for it is very easy to misunderstand any man's talk. When I speak of officers of society, of course I do not mean that people who only go through the primary grades constitute one class of society and High School pupils another. I have said often and in a great many ways that the school house gives and can give a very small part of the education any person receives. It is the *thinking* a man does that educates him. He may gain in a school a good deal of knowledge, which is very useful material for thought. He gets something to think about. He ought also to learn in school where to go to find out things, the books to be used, and how to use them. But most of all, if he is well taught, he gets the habit of thinking aright, of requiring proper and sufficient evidence for his beliefs, of arriving at sound judgments. He may possibly get all this elsewhere, but he is not apt to. And all this is not apparent on the surface, it is not complete in any one individual; it is not a perfect work. But it is all in the right direction, and such is the practical outcome of it. The primary school does somewhat; the high school continues the good work, and yet that is not the end of it; the college goes on with this education, widening the knowledge of the student and training him through harder tasks and subtler methods to a firmer and more active intellectual habit.

What I wish most to impress upon you is the unity of a true educational system. The development of the human mind is a continuous process in which every contact with its environment effects a modification, and this constitutes that

grand education of life that goes on from the cradle to the grave. So the formal education of the school, which makes so small yet so important a part of the Life Education, if properly conducted is, in like manner, continuous. But the ceaseless flow of time itself is marked on the dial plate by an arbitrary division into hours, that stated periods may exist for their appointed tasks. And so by the divisions, more or less arbitrary, we have graded education into Primary, Secondary and Higher, with their subdivisions. Suppose the State has given a boy all that the lowest stage affords, and he now steps up from the Primary to the High School. He is the self-same boy whom the state cherished as its child a moment before. Shall it now cast him off, or will it encourage his advance, as it commanded his start, in the field of knowledge? Its motive then was its right and duty to call into requisition for its own safety, progress and greatness all the possibilities of all its citizens. This motive is mightily reinforced when it is discovered that here are some who are willing to go on with that discipline which experience has shown to be a fair test and preparation for severer mental tasks. So again when he leaves the High School and enters College. These phases are but unfoldings in that process of evolution through which he comes to a fuller knowledge of the universe of matter and the spirit that includes it and to stronger powers and desires to serve his fellow man and the social order to which he belongs. The people of the State should rejoice as they see the aspirants for the higher education increase. It is the few—the remnant, Isaiah calls them—who save the world. An army knows the value of individuals. It is glad to hear of a reinforcement; but the coming of a MAN stirs it like sound of an archangel's trumpet. When Lee stood at Gettysburg or Petersburg, could he have summoned to his aid from out of the invisible a legion of heroes or Stonewall Jackson, do you doubt his choice?

Friends may fear that I concede too much when I speak of the graduates of the University as few in number. They should not be few; they will not be few. They must become a great multitude, with its captains, not only of tens and hundreds, but of thousands. But there can not be any jealousy of

the remnant—the few—but only relatively the few—the few whom the State has educated to serve her. Those who have been trained to amass wealth, rarely use it, except for personal gratification—for themselves. But when the Intellectual Life has been zealously sought through the Higher Education the very opposite feeling is apt to prevail. Its hierarchy see themselves the children of the state, the dear mother, who makes their abiding place a home to be proud of, and they behold in their fellow citizens, not rivals in the scramble for riches, but brethren; and Fraternity becomes a real thing to them.

But there will always be a class of minds that will ask, “Is it right for the State to spend large sums for the benefit of the few?” The real question is not as to the benefit of these few, though there is an answer to that, but as to the benefit of the many. Is it right for the State to exert its utmost energies to qualify men to defend her, to strengthen her, to enrich her, to counsel her wisely, to guide her justly, to place her in the forefront of civilized commonwealths? All states and nations are answering these questions, each after its own fashion, some with enthusiasm, others with steady purpose, others again half-heartedly and bunglingly, and some like “dumb, driven cattle”? To which class shall we belong?

Those nations whose opinion are best worth considering are agreed as to the great value of State Education as a factor in their civilization, and the wisest and greatest of them lay the greatest stress on the unity of the educational system, its coherence, and the special importance of its highest or University phase. Germany has tested and proved the theory that the best trained heads win the game of war; France has accepted, and improved, the lesson; Japan has found in a thorough and logical system of education the Fountain of Youth for her outworn nationality; and the young and vigorous commonwealths of our Federal Union look to State Education as the gymnasium in which they will be fitted to grasp and enjoy all that is best in the social order.

It is the duty of the hour in Louisiana to adopt and perfect a system of education that will bring about the best results for us. To be complete, it must, as I have suggested, rest upon the general education of the whole people. The plan

already in use should be vigorously carried out and its details continually improved. The Parish and City High Schools should be increased and made better, and every encouragement should be given to institutions devoted to the Higher Education. I heard with great pleasure the practical suggestions of President Boyd this morning and hope they may be carried out.

For Tulane University I wish to say one word. It is a component part of the State system of education, as much as any Primary School, or High School, in the State; and it has always attempted to fulfil its obligations as a State institution. Like the Louisiana State University, this university was recognized in the Constitution, and there was a constitutional grant of \$10,000 for its support. When the new charter was conferred, in view of the generous provision made by Mr. Tulane for the support of Tulane University and in view of the impoverished condition of the State treasury at that time, this grant was relinquished. Instead of receiving aid from the State, the Tulane Administrators freely dedicated their revenues to build up a great University in the City of New Orleans, and to do for the people of the State what their representatives felt unable or unwilling to undertake for it. It would seem a corollary of all I have said that the public purse should pay for the highest, as well as the lowest, phases of education. But in consequence of what may have been a fortunate failure in government to perceive this obvious truth in the early days of the republic, requisition was made on private beneficence to supply this defect, and there has been developed in America a spirit of benefaction to higher education in the hearts of individuals such as the world has never before seen; and this after all may be the better way. Mr. Tulane's great and generous gifts were in line of these noble charities, and those of Mrs. Newcomb and Mrs. Richardson, which have added to them, were inspired by the same clear perception that we best serve God in helping man. The consecration of the wealth entrusted to their stewardship by Providence to the grand purposes of the Higher Education relieves the general public from a heavy burden of taxation to accomplish these ends. But it imposes upon it a debt of gratitude to these philanthropists, and upon every citi-

zen an obligation, each in his own way, to aid in carrying out these benevolent designs. But more than this, where a like ability exists, it furnishes an example for imitation. It is a strange thing how the human heart responds to a generous deed; and we may confidently look for similar donations to aid in building up the weak places of the University and in perfecting work that it is laboring with difficulty to accomplish. But when the work of the University is done, and while it is doing, you will see how large a factor it is in the civilizing process that brings to pass a better order of things. You will find not only that it is strengthening them that labor to improve our material resources, but that its voice is always raised on the side of law, justice, humanity and progress. I beg you to bear in mind that the great movement of education in the Primary Schools, High Schools, Colleges and Universities is as essentially one and the same great stream of thought, the same flood tide of human reason, as the Mississippi river is one river at its fountain head and at its mouth.

But I can not close this address, my friends, without adding a word on the vocation to which we are called. The measure of a people's wisdom can be taken by the respect and honor paid to the profession of the teacher; and, if I am not mistaken in this assertion, then assuredly the people of the South have gained wonderfully in good sense in the last generation. The teachers have to a large extent the moulding of the future of the state through its rising generation. They are the missionaries of knowledge, the doorkeepers of the dawn of general intelligence in the coming time. It is not achievement, however, but effort, that makes great the individual. We may say with Browning,

"But try. I urge—the trying shall suffice:  
The aim, if reached or not, makes great the life."

It is in the aspiration and the endeavor that education does its best work, and this applies to us who have passed our school days as well as to the diligent and ambitious student. We can well afford to do our duty, and leave the consequences to Him who orders all things.

In this profession rank is no more the test of merit than in others. When I think of how many fine qualities are

called forth in the conscientious teaching of a Primary School; the industry, the patience, the tact, the benevolence, that are required to lead on the timid, trembling footsteps of a child in the pathway of knowledge, my soul bows in admiration before those truly good and noble natures that do this work in the spirit of humility and love for the little ones. When the cloud of despondency lowers over them, as it does over us all at times, let them recollect that they have the most difficult and delicate tasks in the whole range of educational work, and that their success may be the most fruitful of results. I only wish that I could feel that I had done my work half so well as I know many of you have done yours; but to each according to his strength. And now God be with us all.





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